This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

EX LIBRIS
WALTER
RALEIGH

Rec. D 36

THE LIFE OF Mr. JOHN DENNIS.

79. Tract.

THE

LIFE

OF

Mr. JOHN DENNIS,

The Renowned

CRITICK.

In which are likewise

Some Obſervations on moſt of the POETS and CRITICKS, his CONTEMPORARIES.

Not written by Mr. CURLL.

LONDON:

Printed for J. ROBERTS in *Warwick-Lane.* MDCCXXXIV.

[Price 1 *s.*]

THE

LIFE

OF

MR. JOHN DENNIS,

WITH

CRITICK.

LONDON:

THE

LIFE

OF

Mr. *JOHN DENNIS.*

TO undertake to write the Life of this Gentleman, may be looked upon as vain and ſuperfluous, after its having been already the Subject of the accurate and polite Pen of that ſo juſtly celebrated Biographer Mr. *Giles Jacob*, nothing could excuſe an Attempt of this Kind, if that *learned Lawyer* had thought fit to make this a diſtinct Work by itſelf, and had given an Account of our venerable Critick, as long as that of *all* the two or

three hundred Perſons, who are joined with him, which was certainly his Due, as he had two or three hundred times the Merit of any *one* of them. I ſay, if the *great Mr.* Jacob, would have vouchſafed to have giving the Publick ſuch an Hiſtory of this *fine Genius*, as he himſelf might have called Compleat, who then could ever have endur'd to read any Thing of the ſame Kind after it? Deſpairing to ſee this accompliſh'd, we preſume to add ſomething to his ſhort, yet valuable Performance; but fear alaſs! that all our Pains will be no more than ekeing out the rich Tiſſue of his Writings, with a Train or Border of Linſey Woolſey. Great and voluminous Author! ſurprizing Genius! equal to *Salmon* in Hiſtory, to the Son of the late Earl in Poetry and Learning; far ſuperior to the other Laureat; but in Phyſick, Metaphyſicks, Law, and Theology, *None but thy Self can be thy Parallel!*

Being to write the Life of Mr. *John Dennis*, ſome will wonder perhaps why we dwell thus long upon the Excellencies of another; but our Deſign in this, is to give the more delectable Entertainment

ment to our courteous Readers, and likewiſe to follow the Mode and Faſhion of the preſent Times, and, as far as our poor Abilities will permit us, to imitate the admired Writings of ſome of the choice Spirits of the Age, who do endeavour ſo much to vary from the Subject they firſt ſet out upon as, many times, almoſt, and ſometimes quite to forget it.

We therefore will not promiſe in the Courſe of the following Sheets, not to run into Encomiums upon ſome other Great Names in vogue, and expreſs our juſt Admiration of the elegant Stile, and exceſſive Modeſty of Orator *Henly*; we may perhaps too give the Praiſe which is ſo much due to the ſtrict Honeſty, known Humility, and ſound Underſtanding of Mr. *Addiſon*'s Couſin *Euſtace*; and ſhew our Diſapprobation of the virulent Proceedings of the Authors of the *Grub-ſtreet Journal*, who, tho' they have ſet a certain Affair in ſo clear a Light, that no one Perſon in *Europe*, *Aſia*, *Africa*, or *America*, any longer doubts who were concerned in it, except a little Gentleman, who is to be a GREAT MAN,

MAN, and a learned Lady, who is already a big Woman; nor, as their Friend the *Iriſhman* ſays, They neither: Yet if this Fraternity at the *Pegaſus*, be allowed to go on in this unmannerly Way of telling the Truth, they will in all Probability greatly diſcourage one very uſeful Branch of the Trade of a neighbouring Iſland, and go a great way towards putting a Stop to ſome Arts that are of great Service to the Law.

But to proceed, or rather begin.

Mr. *John Dennis*, the Son of Mr. *Francis Dennis*, Sadler, was born in *London*, in the Year 1657, he was Educated at the Grammar School at *Harrow-on-the-Hill*, under the Care of the Pious and Learned Mr. *William Horn*, having with him as School-Fellows the Lord *Francis Seymour*, and his Brother, the preſent Duke of *Somerſet*, and ſeveral others, who have ſince made no inconſiderable Figure in the World.

At the Age of Eighteen, *viz.* on the 13th of *January*, 1675, he was admitted of *Caius College*, *Cambridge*, and in the Year 1679, he proceeded Batche-

lor

lor of Arts, but did not proceed Master, as Mr. *Jacob* affirms.

Soon after this, having a handsome Fortune left him by an Uncle, who was, if not an Alderman, a wealthy Citizen of *London*, he made the *Tour* of *France* and *Italy*, and at his Return he became intimate in the Acquaintance of some of the most eminent Persons of their Age, in Quality, Wit, and Learning. Among his most hearty and constant Friends, were the Duke of *Buckinghamshire*, the Earls of *Hallifax* and *Pembroke*, Mr. *Anthony Henley*, *Walter Moyle*, Mr. Secretary *Burchet*, *Dryden*, *Garth*, *Wycherly*, and *Congreve*.

One of the first Pieces he published in Poetry, was, *The Passion of* Byblis, made *English* from the Ninth Book of *Ovid's Metamorphoses*. It begins thus:

Bright Nymphs, the Objects of Man-
[kind's Desires.
From Byblis *learn t' avoid incestuous*
[Fires:

She Caunus *lov'd, with Tenderneſs above,*
The cold Endearments of a Siſter's Love.

The whole Poem is tranſlated with Spirit, and has more Harmony in the Numbers, than is commonly to be found in the Verſes of a Critick.

How freely ſoever the Character of this Gentleman has been treated of late, we believe the following Letters will ſufficiently prove, that he was much eſteemed by ſome of the greateſt Genius's of the laſt Age. The firſt is from Mr. *Wycherly*, dated from *Cleve*, near *Shrewſbury*, *Feb.* 4, 1693-4.

Dear Sir,

YOU have found a Way to make me ſatisfy'd with my Abſence from *London*, nay, what is more, with the Diſtance which is now betwixt you and me. That indeed uſes to leſſen Friendſhip, but gives me the greater Mark of yours, by your kind Letter, which I had miſs'd, if I had been nearer to you: So that I, who receive no Rents here, yet

yet muſt own, if I did, I could not receive greater Satisfaction than I had from yours, worth even a Letter of Exchange, or Letter's-Patent; for I value your Friendſhip more than Money, and am prouder of your Approbation, than I ſhould be of Titles. For the having the good Opinion of one who knows Mankind ſo well, argues ſome Merit in me, upon which every Man ought to conſider himſelf more than upon the Goods of Fortune. I had rather be thought your Friend, in Proof of my Judgment and good Senſe, than a Friend to the Muſes; and had rather have you, than them, thought mine. If I am, as you ſay, at once proud and humble, 'tis ſince I have known I have had the Honour to pleaſe you; tho' your Praiſe rather humbles than makes me (tho' a damn'd Poet) more vain. For it is ſo great, that it rather ſeems the Raillery of a witty Man, than the Sincerity of a Friend; and rather proves the Copiouſneſs of your own Invention, than juſtifies the Fertility of mine. But I fear I am forfeiting the Character of the Plain-dealer with you, and ſeem like vain Women, or vainer Men, to refuſe Praiſe but to get more; and ſo by returning

your Compliments, ſhew myſelf grateful out of Intereſt, as Knaves are punctual in ſome Payments, but to augment their Credit. And for your Praiſe of my Humility, (the only Mark of my Knowledge, ſince it is a Mark of my knowing myſelf) you have prais'd that to its Deſtruction, and have given me ſo much, you have left me none. Like thoſe Admirers, who praiſe a young Maid's Modeſty, 'till they deprive her of it. But let me tell you, 'tis not to my Humility that you owe my Friendſhip, but to my Ambition; ſince I can have no greater, than to be eſteemed by you, and the World, your Friend, and to be known to all Mankind for,

Dear Sir, your humble Servant,

W. Wycherly.

Poſtcript.

My dear Friend, I have no way to ſhew my Love to you in my Abſence, but by my Jealouſy, I would not have my Rivals in your Friendſhip, the *Cheeks*, the *Dunſeys*, and *Wymarſells*, and the reſt of your Tavern Friends, enjoy your

Conver-

Converſation, while I cannot: Though I confeſs, 'tis to their Intereſt to make you dumb with Wine, that they may be heard in your Company, tho' it were more the Demonſtration of their Wit to hear you, than to be heard by you. For my own Part, I am ambitious of your Company alone in ſome Solitude, where you and I might be all one. For I am ſure, if I can pretend to any Senſe, I can have no Inſtruction, or Satisfaction of Life better than your Example and your Society.

My Service pray, to all my Friends, that is, to all yours whom I know; and be charitable (as often as you can) to the Abſent, which you good Wits ſeldom are; I mean, be charitable with your Letters to

Your humble Servant.

Poſtcript.

Pray let me have more of your Letters, tho' they ſhould rally me with Compliments undeſerved, as your laſt has done; for like a Country Squire, I am in love with a Town-Wit's Con-

verſation, tho' it be but at a Diſtance, that I am forced to have it, and tho' it abuſes me while I enjoy it.

The next Letter is from Mr. *Dryden*,

My dear Mr. Dennis,

WHEN I read a Letter ſo full of my Commendations, as your laſt, I cannot but conſider you as the Maſter of a vaſt Treaſure, who having more than enough for yourſelf, are forced to ebb out upon your Friends. You have indeed the beſt Right to give them, ſince you have them in Propriety; but they are no more mine when I receive them, than the Light of the Moon can be allowed to be her own, who ſhines but by the Reflection of her Brother. Your own Poetry is a more powerful Example, to prove that the Modern Writers may enter into Compariſon with the Antients, than any which *Perault* could produce in *France*, yet neither he, nor you who, are a better Critick, can perſuade me that there is any room left for a ſolid Commendation at this Time of Day, at leaſt for me. If I undertake the Tranſlation of *Virgil*, the

the little which I can perform, will shew at least, that no Man is fit to write after him, in a barbarous modern Tongue. Neither will his Machines be of any Service to a Christian Poet. We see how ineffectually they have been try'd by *Tasso*, and by *Arioſto*. 'Tis using them too dully, if we only make Devils of his Gods: As if, for Example, I would raiſe a Storm, and make uſe of *Æolus*, with this only Difference, of calling him Prince of the Air, what Invention of mine would there be in this, or who would not ſee *Virgil* thorow me; only the ſame Trick play'd over again by a bungling Juggler? *Boileau* has well obſerved, that it is an eaſy matter in a Chriſtian Poem, for God to bring the Devil to Reaſon. I think I have given a better Hint for new Machines in my Preface to *Juvenal*; where I have particularly recommended two Subjects, one of King *Arthur*'s Conqueſt of the *Saxons*, and the other of the *Black Prince* in his Conqueſt of *Spain*. But the Guardian Angels of Monarchies, and Kingdoms are not to be touch'd by every Hand. A Man muſt be deeply converſant in the Platonick Philoſophy, to deal with them.

And

And therefore I may reasonably expect, that no Poet of our Age will presume to handle those Machines, for fear of discovering his own Ignorance: Or if he should, he might perhaps be ingrateful enough not to own me for his Benefactor. After I have confess'd thus much of our modern Heroick Poetry, I cannot but conclude with Mr. *Rymer*, That our *English* Comedy is far beyond any thing of the Antients. And, notwithstanding our Irregularities, so is our Tragedy. *Shakespear* had a Genius for it; and we know, in spite of Mr. *Rymer*, that Genius alone is a greater Virtue (if I may so call it) than all other Qualifications put together. You see what Success this learned Critick has found in the World, after his blaspheming *Shakespear*. Almost all the Faults which he has discovered are truly there; yet who will read Mr. *Rymer*, or not read *Shakespear*? For my own Part, I reverence Mr. *Rymer*'s Learning, but I detest his Ill-nature and his Arrogance: I indeed, and such as I, have reason to be afraid of him, but *Shakespear* has not. There is another part of Poetry, in which the *English* stand almost upon an equal foot with the Antients; and

'tis

'tis that which we call Pindarick, introduced, but not perfected, by our famous Mr. *Cowley*: And of this, Sir, you are certainly one of the greateſt Maſters. You have the Sublimity of Senſe, as well as Sound, and know how far the Boldneſs of a Poet may lawfully extend. I could wiſh you would cultivate this kind of Ode, and reduce it either to the ſame Meaſures which *Pindar* us'd, or give new Meaſures of your own: For as it is, it looks like a vaſt Tract of Land, newly diſcover'd. The Soil is wonderfully fruitful, but unmanur'd; over ſtock'd with Inhabitants, but almoſt Savages, without Laws, Arts, Arms or Policy. I remember poor *Nat. Lee*, who was then upon the Verge of Madneſs, yet made a ſober and a witty Anſwer to a bad Poet, who told him, *It was an eaſy thing to write like a Madman: No, ſaid he, 'tis very difficult to write like a Madman, but 'tis a very eaſy matter to write like a Fool.* *Otway* and he are ſafe by Death from all Attacks, but we, poor Poets militant (to uſe Mr. *Cowley*'s Expreſſion) are at the Mercy of wretched Scribblers: And when they cannot faſten upon our Verſes, they fall upon our Morals, our Princi-

ples

ples of State and Religion. For my Principles of Religion, I will not juſtify them to you; I know yours are far different. For the ſame Reaſon, I ſhall ſay nothing of my Principles of State. I believe you in yours, follow the Dictates of your Reaſon, as I in mine do thoſe of my Conſcience. If I thought myſelf in an Error, I would retract it; I am ſure that I ſuffer for them: And *Milton* makes even the Devil ſay, That no Creature is in love with Pain. For my Morals, betwixt Man and Man, I am not to be my own Judge. I appeal to the World, if I have deceived or defrauded any Man; and for my private Converſation, they who ſee me every Day, can be the beſt Witneſſes, whether or no it be blameleſs and inoffenſive. Hitherto I have no reaſon to complain, that Men of either Party ſhun my Company. I have never been an impudent Beggar at the Doors of Noblemen: My Viſits have indeed been too rare to be unacceptable; and but juſt enough to teſtify Gratitude for their Bounty, which I have frequently received, but always unask'd, as themſelves will witneſs. I have written more than I needed to you on this Subject: For I dare ſay you

juſtify

juſtify me to yourſelf. As for that which I firſt intended for the principal Subject of this Letter, which is my Friend's Paſſion, and his Deſign of Marriage, on better Conſideration I have changed my Mind; for having had the Honour to ſee my dear Friend *Wycherly*'s Letter to him on that Occaſion, I find nothing to be added or amended. But as well as I love Mr. *Wycherly*, I confeſs I love myſelf ſo well, that I will not ſhew how much I am inferior to him in Wit and Judgment, by undertaking any thing after him. There is *Moſes* and the Prophets in his Counſel. *Jupiter* and *Juno*, as the Poets tell us, made *Teriſias* their Umpire, in a certain merry Diſpute, which fell out in Heaven betwixt them. *Teriſias*, you know, had been of both Sexes, and therefore was a proper Judge; our Friend Mr. *Wycherly*, is full as competent an Arbitrator. He has been a Batchelor, and marry'd Man, and is now a Widower. *Virgil* ſays of *Ceneus:*

Nunc vir nunc Fœmina Ceneus,
Rurſus & in veterem fato revoluta
[*figuram.*

Yet I ſuppoſe he will not give any large Commendations to his middle State; nor, as the Sailor ſaid, will be fond after a Shipwreck to put to Sea again. If my Friend will adventure after this, I can but wiſh him a good Wind, as being his, and,

My Dear Mr. Dennis,

Your moſt Affectionate,

And moſt faithful Servant,

John Dryden.

There is another Letter to him from Mr. *Congreve*, *concerning Humour in Comedy*, which being very long, we will tranſcribe only the Concluſion of it, by which our Readers may ſee the Deference that fine Writer paid to Mr. *Dennis*'s Judgment.

" Thus you have my Thoughts of " *Humour*, to my Power of expreſſing " them in ſo little Time and Compaſs. " You will be kind to ſhew me where- " in I have erred, and as you are very " capable of giving me Inſtruction, ſo

" I think I have a very juſt Title to " demand it from you, being, without " Reſerve,

Your real Friend,

July 10, 1695. *And humble Servant,*

Will. Congreve.

One of the firſt Pieces Mr. *Dennis* wrote, after *The Paſſion of* Byblis, was a Pindarick Ode on King *William*, occaſioned by the Victory at *Aghrim*.

He wrote another Poem, called, *The Court of Death*, dedicated to the Memory of her moſt Sacred Majeſty Queen MARY, a Pindarick likewiſe; of his Excellence, in which kind of writing, the Opinion of Mr. *Dryden*, in one of the foregoing Epiſtles, is a ſufficient Teſtimony.

In the Year 1697, appeared the firſt Play of our Author, which was a Comedy called, *A Plot and no Plot*, or *Jacobite Credulity*, acted at the Theatre Royal in *Drury-Lane*; and dedicated to the Earl of *Sunderland*. This Comedy

is ſo diverting, that it is very ſurprizing that none of the wiſe Managers of the Stage have ever thought it worth reviveing, eſpecially when there has been ſo great a Dearth of comick Humour, that a Thing, called a Comedy, tho' it had not the Shadow of one Joke in it, has ran eighteen Nights together; we mean *Achilles*, written by Mr. *Gay*, but would not by ſaying this, depreciate the other Writings of that Gentleman, which have the greateſt Merit in them, particularly the *Beggars Opera*, wherein there are undoubtedly Wit, Humour, Satyr, Novelty, and all that can render an Entertainment of that kind truely agreeable.

The next Dramatick Piece of Mr. *Dennis*'s was *Rinaldo* and *Armida*, a Tragedy, acted at the Theatre in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*, in the Year 1699, and dedicated to the Duke of *Ormond*.

Iphigenia, his third Performance in this way, was acted at the ſame Theatre, the next Year, *viz.* 1700, but was publiſhed without a Dedication, for this Reaſon, His intimate Friend, Colonel *Codrington*, Governor of the Leeward Iſlands,

Hands, having taken a great deal of Pains to ſupport his Intereſt, at the Repreſentation, not only by writing the *Epilogue* to it, but by engaging all his Friends to take Tickets for the Poet's Night, Mr. *Dennis* thought himſelf obliged, as he had been really his Patron, to make a publick Acknowledgment of it; but when he told the Colonel his Intentions, he would by no means conſent to it, telling him, That after what he had done, it would be thought, by every body, that he had courted the Dedication: But that the Author might not imagine he did it to ſave the Preſent, which is uſually made on thoſe Occaſions, he forced (undoubtedly without any great Violence) an hundred Guineas upon him.

The next Piece publiſhed by our Author was a Poem, called, *The* MONUMENT, ſacred to the *Immortal Memory* of the beſt and greateſt of Kings, WILLIAM *the Third*, King of *Great-Britain*, &c. and dedicated to the Duke of *Devonſhire*.

In the two or three following Years he wrote only ſome Proſe Pamphlets, *viz.*

PRIEST-

PRIESTCRAFT *dangerous to Religion and the Government, in a Letter to a Member of Parliament*, writ in 1702.

A PROPOSAL, *for putting a speedy End to the Wars*, written upon *the Death of* Charles *the Second, of* Spain, and published in 1703.

AN ESSAY *upon* PUBLICK SPIRIT.

The Grounds of CRITICISM in POETRY, *&c.*

But in the Year 1704, came out his Favourite Tragedy, LIBERTY ASSERTED, acted at the Theatre in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*, dedicated to *Anthony Henley*, Esq; to whom he says he was indebted, *for the happy Hint upon which it was form'd; and that his Intent in writing it was to do good to his Country, to open the Eyes of deluded Men, to inspire them with the Love of* Liberty, *and unite and animate them against the common Foe of* EUROPE.

The Author's Fondness of this Play, together with the Success of it, if we may be-

believe ſome of his ſneering Enemies, who are for turning every thing of Importance into Ridicule, almoſt touched his Brain; for they gave out that he imagined the *French* King, *Lewis* the Fourteenth, was ſo much offended at it, that he never would make Peace with *England*, unleſs the delivering up Mr. *Dennis*, was one of the Articles of it. And that being once at a Gentleman's Houſe, near the Coaſts of *Suſſex*, as he was walking by the Sea-ſide one Morning, he ſpied a Ship making, as he thought, towards him, which immediately apprehending to be a Privateer, he made the beſt of his Way to *London*, even in his Gown and Slippers, as he was, without taking Leave of his Friend, whom he accus'd of a villainous Deſign of decoying him down to his Houſe, that he might deliver him up to the *French*.

If the late Duke of *Marlborough* did not, according to his Requeſt, write to the Plenipotentiaries at the Congreſs of *Utrecht*, to take Care of Mr. *Dennis*'s Safety, having but little Intereſt with them, or thinking perhaps that he had not done the *French* much more Damage than his Grace himſelf, yet he had

had on other Occaſions expreſs'd a very good Regard for him, particularly by procuring him the Place of one of the *Queen's Waiters* in the Cuſtom-houſe, a *Sine Cure* of about 120 *l. per Annum*, which he enjoyed above Ten Years, and then diſpoſed of for ſix hundred Pounds.

Our Author ſhew'd his great Eſteem for that illuſtrious Hero, by the two Poems he wrote on the Battles of *Blenheim* and *Ramillies*, for the firſt of which he had a Preſent from the Duke of an hundred Pounds. The laſt was dedicated to the Lord *Halliſax*, which great Patron of Wit and Learning was, to the Time of his Death, a Friend and Benefactor to our Author; tho' at his firſt Introduction into that Nobleman's Acquaintance, an Accident happened, which might have loſt him the Favour of another not ſo well able to diſcern his Merit as my Lord *Halliſax*, for being invited to Supper, and getting much intoxicated with ſome fine Wines, he had not been often uſed to, he grew ſo impatient of all Contradiction, that he got up, on a ſudden, and left the Room, but

at

at his *Exit*, overturn'd the whole Side-board of Plate and Glaſſes.

The next Morning ſeeing *Walter Moyle*, who was one of the Company, he told him he had quite forgot every thing that happened, for he was much in Liquor, and deſired he would tell him in what Manner he went away. Why, Sir, ſaid Mr. *Moyle*, you went away like the Devil, and took one Corner of the Houſe with you.

Being another time at the ſame Nobleman's Houſe, my Lord having a fine Parrot he was very fond of, and happening to turn towards *Poll*, to ſtroke and play with him, Mr. *Dennis* got up again on a ſudden, I ſee, ſaid he, your Lordſhip is engaged, I will wait upon you another Time, and before my Lord could make any Anſwer was got to the Door.

But now to give our Readers ſome farther Account of his Writings, according to the Order of Time in which they were publiſhed, we muſt acquaint them in that the Year 1706, he wrote AN ESSAY *on the* OPERAS *after the*

Italian Manner, *which are about to be Eſtabliſhed on the* Engliſh *Stage.*

This ſmall Treatiſe, ſaith the Author in his Preface, is only levelled againſt thoſe Operas which are entirely Muſical; for thoſe which are Dramatical may be partly defended by the Example of the Antients. He endeavours to ſhew in this Treatiſe, that the *Engliſh* Stage is like to be overthrown by the Progreſs of *Operas*, and ſays it would be eaſy to ſhew the Importance of the Stage to the Publick; that People muſt and will have Diverſions, and that a great and flouriſhing People will have Publick Diverſions; that if the Government does not take care to provide reaſonable Diverſions for them, they will not fail to provide ſuch for themſelves as are without Reaſon: That unreaſonable Ones are pernicious to Government, and that reaſonable Ones are advantageous to it; that Pleaſure of Senſe being too much indulged, makes Reaſon ceaſe to be a Pleaſure, and by conſequence is contrary both to publick and private Duty: That the *Drama* of all reaſonable Diverſions, is the beſt that has ever been invented, at once to delight

light and inſtruct the World; that it has never flouriſhed but in three or four of the braveſt Nations that have been ſince the World began, and that in the moſt flouriſhing States of thoſe Nations; and that a People muſt have a very good Share of Virtue, as well as Underſtanding, before they can receive it among them; that it is ſo very agreeable to good Government, that moſt of the Great Men who have writ of the Art of Government, from *Plato* down to *Harrington*, have writ either Plays, or Directions, or Rules for the Stage: That ſome of the greateſt Monarchs, and greateſt Miniſters of State, have not only encouraged Plays, but have writ them themſelves; and ſome of the greateſt Philoſophers have done the ſame; that here in *England* indeed, two or three formal affected Bigots, have endeavoured to contradict all theſe, and the common Senſe of Men, and upon a Pretence of making all Men good Chriſtians, which *Chriſt* and his Apoſtles have ſo often told us never will be, have actually made Thouſands ten times worſe than they would have been without them: That the Conſequence of their Writings has been, that Plays have been for ſome Years diſcouraged,

diſcouraged, and Diverſions eſtabliſhed in the room of them, that have really been, and are like to be ten times more prejudicial to the Publick than ever Plays were pretended to be: That one of thoſe Diverſions has been Gaming, which has done unſpeakable Harm to both Sexes, in every Part of the Town: That Gaming, ſince the publiſhing the Books againſt the Stage, has increaſed ten fold, and that the Number of Bankrupts during that Time has been as much augmented: That the Number of Cuckolds in all likelihood has advanced proportionably: That Gaming, by giving Men a Privilege to be familiar with, and ſometimes rude to Women, removes that Awe which Nature has placed between the Sexes, as the ſtrongeſt Bulwark of Chaſtity: That when a young Lady, even of the ſtricteſt and moſt unblemiſhed Honour, loſes a Sum of Money, which ſhe dares not own to her Relations, and which ſhe cannot pay without them, and loſes it to a young agreeable Fellow, who perhaps loves her, and has a ſecret Deſign upon her, ſhe finds a Temptation that tries her utmoſt Virtue.

He

He endeavours to ſhew that the *Italian* Opera is a Diverſion of more pernicious Conſequence than the moſt licentious Play that ever has appeared upon the Stage, and ſays, that Experience ſhews what Influence the ſoft and effeminate Meaſures of the *Italian Operas* have upon the Minds and Manners of Men. The modern *Italians* have the very ſame Sun and Soil which the antient *Romans* had, yet are their Manners directly oppoſite; their Men are neither Virtuous, nor Wiſe nor Valiant; and they who have Reaſon to know their Women, never truſt them out of their Sight. It is impoſſible, continues he, to give any Reaſon of ſo great a Difference between the antient *Romans* and modern *Italians* but only LUXURY, and the reigning *Luxury* of modern *Italy*, is that ſoft and effeminate Muſick, which abounds in the *Italian Opera*.

How would this poor Gentleman's manly Spirit have been moved, if he had lived but a few Weeks longer than he did, to have ſeen two *Italian Operas*, eſtabliſhed in *London* at once! and to have heard that grave Senators and Generals of the Army, have been ready to

go

go to Logger-heads by ſiding with the different Parties of two ſqueaking Eunuchs, *Seneſino* and *Carraſtini!*

O Tempora! O Mores!

We are now to ſpeak of the next Performance of Mr. *Dennis*, which was his Tragedy of *Appius* and *Virginia*, acted at the Theatre Royal in *Drury Lane*, in the Year 1708, and dedicated to that great Stateſman and Patriot, *Sidney*, Earl of *Godolphin*. The following, publiſhed in a Collection of Letters, written by Mr. *Dennis* and others, will ſhew the Reader what Opinion one of the fineſt Genius's of the preſent Age had of this Play.

Mr. *Maynwaring* to Mr. *Dennis*, ſent with the Manuſcript of *Appius* and *Virginia*.

Sir,

I am very much aſhamed that you have been ſo often at my Lodgings to call for your Play, which I would have ſent you long ſince, if I had known where you lived. I read it over with a great deal

deal of Pleaſure, and am of Opinion it will be the beſt Tragedy that has appear'd theſe many Years. I am,

Sir,

April 7, 1708. *Your moſt humble Servant*,

Arthur Maynwaring.

If this Play had not ſo long a Run as it deſerved, yet it was very ſucceſsful in one Part of it, *viz.* the *Thunder*, which, tho' of our Critick's own Invention, the Players had the Impudence to make Uſe of it in other Dramatic Performances, where that neceſſary Incident, is oftentimes introduced to keep the Audience awake, Mr. *Dennis* was very much enraged at this Piece of Theft, and could not help crying out aloud in the Pit, the firſt Time he heard it in another Play, *'Sdeath! that's my* THUNDER!

The next Play of Mr. *Dennis*'s was, The *Comical Gallant*, with the Humours of Sir *John Falſtaff*, a Comedy; being an Alteration of *Shakeſpear's Merry Wives of Windſor*. The exact Time when

when this Play was acted, hath not been noted by Mr. *Jacob*, or any other of the Commentators.

In the Year 1712, he wrote a Pamphlet intituled, *Reflections critical and satyrical, on a Rhapsody, called an Essay on Criticism*, in which he gives this Character of the Author, [Mr. *P.*]

'He is a little affected Hypocrite, who 'has nothing in his Mouth but Candour, Truth, Friendship, good Nature, Humanity, and Magnanimity. 'He is so great a Lover of Falshood, 'that whenever he has a Mind to calumniate his Cotemporaries, he upbraids 'them with some Defect, which is just 'contrary to some good Quality, for 'which all their Friends and their Acquaintance commend them.

And of his Poem he says, 'His Precepts are false, or trivial, or both, his 'Thoughts are crude and abortive, his 'Expressions absurd, his Numbers harsh 'and unmusical, without Cadence or 'Variety, his Rhimes trivial and common instead; of majesty, we have something that is very mean; instead of 'Gravity, something that is very boyish,

'and

'and instead of Perspicuity, and lucid
'Order, we have but too often Obscu-
'rity and Confusion.

In the Year 1713, came out his famous Remarks on Mr. *Addison*'s *Cato*, in which he would allow neither Plot, Manners, Sentiment, or Diction: This occasioned a Pamphlet to be wrote, called, *The Narrative of Doctor* Robert Norris, *concerning the strange and deplorable Frenzy of Mr.* John Dennis, *an Officer at the Custom-House*, wherein the Author introduces the following Dialogue, between the Doctor and his Patient.

Doct. Pray, Sir, how did you contract this Swelling?

Den. By a Criticism.

Doct. A Criticism! that's a Distemper I never read of.

Den. 'S Death, Sir, a Distemper! it is no Distemper, but a noble Art. I have sat fourteen Hours a Day at it; and are you a Doctor, and don't know

there's a Communication between the Legs and the Brain?

Doct. What made you sit so many Hours, Sir?

Den. Cato, Sir.

Doct. Sir, I speak of your Distemper, what gave you this Tumour?

Den. Cato, Cato, Cato.

Old Wem. For God's Sake, Doctor, name not this evil Spirit, 'tis the whole Cause of his Madness: Alas! poor Master's just falling into his Fits.

Mr. *Lintott.* Fits! Z—— what Fits? A Man may well have Swellings in his Legs, that sits writing fourteen Hours in a Day: He got this by the *Remarks.*

Doct. The *Remarks!* what are those?

Den. 'S Death! have you never read my Remarks? I will be damned if this Dog *Lintott* ever published my Advertisements.

Mr. *Lint.*

Mr. *Lint.* Z——n! I published Advertisement upon Advertisement; and if the Book be not read, it is none of my Fault, but his that made it: By G——, as much has been done for the Book, as cou'd be done for any Book in Christendom.

Doct. We do not talk of Books, Sir, I fear those are the Fuel that feed his *Delirium*; mention them no more. You do very ill to promote this Discourse.

I desire a Word in private with this other Gentleman, who seems a grave and sensible Man: I suppose, Sir, you are his Apothecary.

Gent. Sir, I am his Friend.

Doct. I doubt it not. What Regimen have you observ'd since he has been under your Care? You remember, I suppose, the Passage of *Celsus*, which says, if the Patient on the third Day, have an Interval, suspend the Medicaments at Night; let Fumigations be used to corroborate the Brain; I hope you have upon no Account promoted Sternutation by Hellebore.

Gent. Sir, no ſuch Matter, you utterly miſtake.

Doct. Miſtake? Am I not a Phyſician? And ſhall an Apothecary diſpute my *Noſtrums*——You may perhaps have fill'd up a Preſcription or two of *Ratcliff's*, which chanced to ſucceed, and with that very Preſcription injudiciouſly preſcrib'd to different Conſtitutions, have deſtroyed a Multitude. *Pharmacopola componat, Medicus ſolus preſcribat.* Fumigate him, I ſay, this very Evening, while he is relieved by an Interval.

Den. 'S Death, Sir, my Friend an Apothecary! a baſe Mechanic! he who, like myſelf, profeſſes the nobleſt Sciences in the Univerſe, Criticiſm and Poetry. Can you think I would ſubmit my Writings to the Judgment of an Apothecary? By the Immortals, he himſelf inſerted three whole Paragraphs in my *Remarks*, had a Hand in my *Publick Spirit*, nay, aſſiſted me in my Deſcription of the *Furies, and infernal Regions* in my *Appius*.

Mr. *Lint.* He is an Author; you miſtake the Gentleman, Doctor, he has been

an

an Author for these twenty Years, to his Bookseller's Knowledge, and no Man's else.

Den. Is all the Town in a Combination? Shall Poetry fall to the Ground? Must our Reputation be lost to all Foreign Countries? O Destruction! Perdition! *Opera! Opera!* As Poetry once raised Cities, so when Poetry fails, Cities are overturn'd, and the World is no more.

Doct. He raves, he raves; Mr. *Lintott*, I pray you pinion down his Arms, that he may do no Mischief.

Den. O I am sick, sick to Death.

Doct. That is a good Symptom, a very good Symptom. To be sick to Death (say the modern Physicians) is an excellent Symptom, when a Patient is sensible of his Pain, 'tis half a Cure. Pray, Sir, of what are you sick?

Den. Of every thing, of every thing. I am sick of the *Sentiments*, of the *Diction*, of the *Protasis*, of the *Epitasis*, and the *Catastrophe*— Alas, what is become of the *Drama*, the *Drama?*

Old

Old Wom. The *Drum*, Sir? Mr. *Lintott* drank up all the Gin just now; but I'll go fetch more presently.

Doct. O shameful Want, scandalous Omission! by all the Immortals, here is no *Peripatia*, no Change of Fortune in the Tragedy; Z—— no Change at all.

Old Wom. Pray, good Sir, be not angry, I'll fetch *Change*.

Doct. Hold your Peace, Woman, his Fit increases, good Mr. *Lintott* hold him.

Mr. *Lint.* Plague on't! I am damnably afraid they are in the Right of it, and he is mad in earnest: If he should be really mad, who the Devil will buy the *Remarks*?

[*Here Mr.* Lintott *scratched his Head.*]

Doct. Sir, I shall order you the Cold Bath To-morrow—— Mr. *Lintott*, you are a sensible Man; pray send for Mr. *Kerdier*'s Servant, and as you are a Friend to the Patient, be so kind as to stay this Evening whilst he is chop'd on

the Head. The Symptoms of his Madness seems to be desperate; for *Horace* says, that if Learning be mix'd with a Brain that is not of a Contexture fit to receive it: the Brain foments till it be totally exhausted. We must eradicate these undigested Ideas out of the *Pericranium*, and reduce the Patient to a competent Knowledge of himself.

Den. Caitiffs stand off, unhand me, Miscreants! Is the Man whose whole Endeavours are to bring the Town to Reason mad? Is the Man who settles Poetry on the Basis of Antiquity mad? Dares any one assert there is a *Peripatia* in that vile Piece that's foisted upon the Town for a Dramatick Poem? That Man is mad, the Town is mad, the World is mad. See *Longinus* in my right Hand, and *Aristotle* in my left; I am the only Man among the Moderns that support them. Am I to be Assassinated? And shall a Bookseller, who hath lived upon my Labours, take away that Life to which he owes his Support?

Gent. By your Leave, Gentlemen, I apprehend you not. I must not see my

Friend

Friend ill treated; he is no more affected with Lunacy than myself: I am also of the same Opinion as to the *Peripetia*———Sir, by the Gravity of your Countenance and Habit, I would conceive you to be a Graduate Physician; but by your indecent and boisterous Treatment of this Man of Learning, I perceive you are a violent sort of a *Person*, I am loath to say *Quack*, who rather than his Drugs should lie upon his own Hands, would get rid of them, by cramming them into the Mouths of others: The Gentleman is of good Condition, sound Intellectuals, and unerring Judgment: I beg you will not oblige me to resent these Proceedings.

Dr. *Norris*, says, these were all the Words that passed between them at that Time; but as he was going home, and entering into a Discourse of this Gentleman's Madness, Mr. *Lintott* gave him the following remarkable Relation.

That on the 17th of *May*, 1712, between the Hours of 10 and 11 in the Morning, Mr. *John D——is* enter'd into his Shop, and opening one of the Volumes of the *Spectator* in the large

Paper,

Paper, did ſuddenly, without the leaſt Provocation, tear out that Number where the Author treats of Poetical Juſtice, and caſt it into the Street. That the ſaid Mr. *John D——is*, on the 27th of *March*, 1712, finding on the ſaid Mr. *Lintott*'s Counter, a Book called *An Eſſay on Criticiſm*, juſt then publiſhed, he read a Page or two with much Frowning, till coming to theſe two Lines:

Some have at firſt for Wits, then Po-
[ets paſt,
Turn'd Criticks next, and prov'd plain
[Fools at laſt.

He flung down the Book in a terrible Fury, and cried out, *By G——d he means me.*

That being in his Company on a certain Time, when *Shakeſpear* was mentioned as of a contrary Opinion to Mr. *Dennis*, he ſwore the ſaid *Shakeſpear* was a *Raſcal*, with other defamatory Expreſſions, which gave Mr. *Lintott* a very ill Opinion of the ſaid *Shakeſpear*.

That about two Months after, he came again into the Shop, and caſt ſeveral

ſuſpicious Looks on a Gentleman that ſtood by him, after which he deſired ſome Information concerning the Perſon: He was no ſooner acquainted that the Gentleman was a new Author, and that his firſt Piece was to be publiſhed in a few Days, but he drew his Sword upon him, and had not this Bookſeller's Servant luckily catch'd him by the Sleeve, he might have loſt one Author upon the Spot, and another the next Seſſions.

This whole Account, tho' ſign'd by the Doctor, and dated from his Houſe on *Snow-hill*, we take to be a Forgery, and publiſhed on purpoſe to ſlander Mr. *Dennis*; for tho' we have found ſuch a Place in *London* as *Snow-hill*, yet we cannot learn that any Phyſician whoſe Name is *Norris* liveth there.

In the Year 1714, our Author wrote a Poem, on the Acceſſion of King *George* to the *Britiſh* Throne. This Piece is in *Miltonick* Verſe, or what is called ſo.

In the Year 1716, he was ſaid to be concerned with Mr. *Gildon*, in puliſh-

ing

ing *A true Character of Mr. Pope and his Writings*; but this we believe is a Miſtake.

In 1717, he wrote Remarks upon Mr. *Pope*'s Tranſlation of *Homer*, with two Letters concerning the *Windſor Foreſt*, and *The Temple of Fame*. In his Remarks he ſays, 'I wonder how this 'Gentleman would look, ſhould it be 'diſcovered, that he has not tranſlated 'ten Verſes together, in any Book of '*Homer* with Juſtice to the Poet, and 'yet he dares reproach his Fellow-'writers with not underſtanding *Greek*.' In another Place, 'The *Homer* which '*Lintott* prints, does not talk like *Ho-'mer*, but like *Pope*; and he who tran-'ſlated him one would ſwear had a Hill 'in *Tipperary* for his *Parnaſſus*, and a 'Puddle in ſome Bog for his *Hippo-'crene*.

Of *Windſor Foreſt* he ſays, 'That it 'is a wretched Rhapſody, impudently 'writ in Emulation of the *Cooper's-hill* 'of Sir *John Denham*. The Author 'of it is obſcure, is ambiguous, is affect-'ed, is temerarious, is barbarous.

The next Year, *viz.* 1718, Mr. *Dennis*, publiſhed his ſelect Works in two Volumes, by Subſcription; and *Anno* 1720, came out his Tragedy called *The Invader of his Country: Or, the fatal Reſentment.* Being an Alteration of *Shakeſpear's Coriolanus.* It was acted at the Theatre-Royal in *Drury-Lane*, and dedicated to his Grace *Thomas* Duke of *Newcaſtle*, Lord Chamberlain of his Majeſty's Houſhold, to whom our Author makes a grievous Complaint of the ill Uſage of the Players, eſpecially for putting off his Benefit to a *Friday*; and tells the Duke that *Friday* is not only the very worſt Day in the Week, but this *Friday* worſe than any other *Friday*. And after an Epilogue written by himſelf, and intended to be ſpoken, he has this remarkable *Advertiſement.*

'The *Epilogue* which follows, was 'writ by Mr. *Cibber*, and ſpoke by Mrs. 'Oldfield. I never could get a Sight of 'it before it was ſpoke, and when it was 'ſpoke, I heard it at ſuch a Diſtance 'from Mrs. *Oldfield*, that I heard it very 'imperfectly. When I came to read it, 'I found it to be a wretched Medley of 'Impudence and Nonſenſe. As I ſaw

'he

'he had made exceeding bold with me,
'so I found, that like a very honest
'Gentleman, he had betray'd the Trust
'repos'd in him, and endeavour'd to
'give the Audience an ill Impression
'of the Play. At the latter End of the
'Epilogue, there is an Appearance of
'Loyalty, which saved the whole from
'the Fate which had otherwise attend-
'ed it. But 'tis as easy for Mr. *Cibber*
'at this time of Day, to make a Bounce
'with his Loyalty, as 'tis for a Bully
'at Sea, who had lain hid in the Hold
'all the Time of the Fight, to come up
'and swagger upon the Deck, after the
'Danger is over. I would fain hear of
'some Proof that he gave of his Zeal
'for the Protestant Succession, before
'the King's Accession to the Crown, or
'some Proof which he has given since
'by any Action which was not to get
'him Money, and bring the Court to
'his Play. I am perfectly satisfied that
'any Author who brings a Play to
'*Drury-Lane*, must, if 'tis a good one,
'be sacrificed to the Jealousy of this
'fine Writer, unless he has either a
'powerful Cabal, or unless he will flat-
'ter Mr. *Robert Wilks*, and make him
'believe that he is an excellent Trage-

'dian;

'dian; which would be as Ridiculous 'and Absurd, as it would be to Com-'pliment a Fellow in a Fair, upon his 'walking on the high Rope, who is on-'ly a Tumbler; or as it would be to 'Complement Mr. *Cibber* upon his Ma-'ster-pieces in Tragedies, *Perolla*, and 'the *Heroick Daughter*, which are as 'full of Nonsense and false *English*, even 'as this Epilogue, and are full of stiff, 'awkward, affected Stuff, and Lines 'that make as hideous a Noise, as if 'they were composed in an Itinerant 'Wheel-barrow.

'To end as I began with the Epi-'logue; if any Reader can tell me the 'Meaning of some Lines in it, *erit mi-'hi magnus* Apollo.

The Invader of his Country was Mr. *Dennis*'s last Performance for the Stage, therefore it may not be improper in this Place to sum up his Character as a Dramatick Writer, in the Words of the greatly esteemed Mr. *Jacob*. We are not ignorant that indeed *Martinus Scriblerus* saith this Character was drawn by himself.

'This

This Gentleman in his Comedy, hath shewn a great deal of Juſtneſs, and Delicacy of Reflection, a Pleaſantneſs of Humour, a Novelty and Diſtinction of Characters, an admirable Conduct and Deſign, and a uſeful Moral. When he firſt began to write Tragedy, he ſaw, with Concern, that Love had the entire Poſſeſſion of the Tragick Stage, contrary to the Nature and Deſign of Tragedy, the Practice of *Sophocles*, *Euripides*, and our Countryman *Shakeſpear*. As his Intentions were more to get Reputation than Money, and to gain the Approbation of the Judicious and Knowing (which he looked upon as a certain Earneſt of future Fame) rather than a Crowd of ignorant Spectators and Readers; he reſolved to deviate a little from the reigning Practice of the Stage; and not to make his Heroes whining Slaves in their Amours; which not only debaſes the Majeſty of Tragedy, but confounds moſt of its principal Characters, by making that Paſſion the predominate Quality in all, and which muſt for ever make the preſent and ſucceeding Writers unable to attain to the

Excellency of the Antients: But he did not think it adviſeable at once to ſhew his principal Characters wholly exempt from it, apprehending that ſo great and ſudden an Alteration might prove diſagreeable; he rather choſe to ſteer a middle Courſe, and to make Love appear violent, but at the ſame time to give way to the Force of Reaſon, or to the Influence of ſome other noble Paſſion, as in *Rinaldo*, it gives Place to Glory; and in *Iphigenia*, to Friendſhip; and in *Liberty Aſſerted*, to the publick Good. He thought by theſe Means an Audience might be entertained and prepared for greater Alterations, whereby the Dignity of Tragedy might be ſupported, and its principal Characters juſtly diſtinguiſhed.

Beſides the Plays aforementioned, Mr. *Jacob*, in a ſort of Supplement to what he had ſaid in the firſt Part of his Work, gives us an Account of a Comedy, wrote by Mr. *Dennis*, called *Gibraltar*, or, *The Spaniſh Adventure*, acted at the Theatre-Royal in *Drury-Lane*: And likewiſe that abuſive Quack, Dr. *Robert Norris*,

Norris, in his Narrative, saith, he saw it neatly bound and gilt in the Chamber of his Patient, but believes it is no where else to be found.

The Year after Mr. *Dennis*'s ill Success with the *Invader of his Country*, he published by Subscription, two Volumes of his Letters, and by this which follows, there seems, at that Time, to have been a Truce made between him and the Author of *The Essay on Criticism*.

To Mr. POPE.

April 29, 1711.

SIR,

AS you have subscribed for two of my Books, I have ordered them to be left for you at Mr. *Congreve*'s Lodgings: As most of those Letters were writ during the Time that I was so unhappy as to be in a State of War with you, I was forced to maim and mangle, at least, ten of them, that no Footsteps might remain of that Quarrel. I particularly left out about half the

Letter which was wrote upon publiſhing the Paper called the *Guardian*.

I am, Sir,

Your moſt obedient,

Humble Servant,

John Dennis.

Tho' the War was terminated for a Time in this Quarter, yet it ſoon after broke out with great Fury in another, and firſt ſhew'd itſelf in a Pamphlet, wrote againſt Sir *Richard Steele*, entituled:

Mr. *Dennis*'s *Defence of Sir* Fopling Flutter, *a Comedy, written by Sir* George Etherege. In which Defence is ſhewn, that Sir *Fopling*, that merry Knight, was rightly compos'd by the Knight his Father, to anſwer the Ends of Comedy, and that he has been barbaroully and ſcurriouſly attack'd by the Knight his Brother, in the 65th *Spectator*; by which it appears, that the latter Knight knows nothing of the Nature of Comedy.

He

He afterwards wrote another Pamphlet entituled:

The Characters and Conduct of Sir John Edgar, *call'd by himself, sole Monarch of the Stage in* Drury-Lane, *and his three Deputy-Governors.*

Here the Reader is to obſerve, that Sir *John Edgar*, was the Name ſet to a Paper, called *The Theatre*, writ by Sir *Richard Steele*; which Mr. *Dennis* was greatly offended at; tho' not quite ſo much as the Year following at his *Conſcious Lovers*; but that Piece being wrote ſo directly contrary to every Rule in *Ariſtotle*, he could not forbear writing twelve-Pennyworth of Remarks upon it, of which take the following as a Specimen:

'But now, ſaith he, (Page 27) the 'Mention of the Infant Captive, brings 'to my Remembrance the Circumſtan-'ces of that Captivity, which are to uſe 'Mr. *Cimberton*'s Expreſſion, pregnant 'with Abſurdity. *Indiana*, it ſeems, 'with her Mother and her Aunt, are 'taken, in their Paſſage to the *Indies*,

'by a Privateer from *Toulon*, and car-
'ried into that Place. Now where
'were they taken? It muſt be either in
'the Channel, or on the Ocean. Now,
'in the firſt Place, I never heard that
'*Toulon* ſet out Privateers. *Secondly*,
'Suppoſe they did, 'tis improbable that
'a Privateer from *Toulon* ſhould cruize
'in the Ocean, and much more impro-
'bable that they ſhould rove as far as
'the Channel. *Thirdly*, 'Tis highly
'improbable, that an *Eaſt-India* Veſſel,
'which had Force enough to venture
'without a Convoy, ſhould be taken
'by a Privateer. *Fourthly*, 'Tis not a
'jot more probable, that ſuppoſing a
'Privateer from *Toulon* ſhould have ta-
'ken ſuch a Veſſel, it ſhould chuſe to
'carry it into *Toulon*, rather than into
'*Breſt*, or St. *Malo*.

Every one muſt needs ſee the Juſtneſs and Uſefulneſs of this ſort of Criticiſm, and how much it is to the main Buſineſs and Deſign of the Play.

Thus we ſee this great Critick triumphing over *Addiſon*, *Pope*, and *Steele*. And now to ſhew that his Thoughts were not wholly employed on *Poetry*, he

he the next Year, 1724, enter'd into a religious Controverſy, and wrote an Anſwer to Dr. *Mandeville's Fable of the Bees*, and a Defence of the Charity-Schools: He likewiſe tranſlated Dr. *Burnet's De Statu Mortuorum*.

In the Year 1726, came out Mr. *Dennis*'s Anſwer to Mr. *Law*'s *abſolute unlawfulneſs of all Stage Entertainments*. It was called, *The Stage defended, from Scripture, Reaſon, Experience, and the common Senſe of Mankind, for two thouſand Years*, &c. This Pamphlet was dedicated to the Right Honourable *George Dodington*, Eſq; one of the Lords Commiſſioners of his Majeſty's Treaſury.

A Man, at firſt Sight, by this Title, would be apt to think that *Scripture, Reaſon, Experience*, and *Common Senſe*, were Enemies to the *Stage*. Our Author, had no ſuch Meaning, but as he has commonly made the *Stage* and the *State* depend upon one another, in this Piece he endeavours to demonſtrate that all who have written againſt the Firſt were *Jacobites* and *Nonjurors*; and concludes in theſe Words.

But

'But now let us consider, the Time
'that those People have chose to exert
'their pretended *Zeal*. It has been al-
'ways when something has been about
'to be done, which it was thought
'might prove favourable to the *Pre-*
'*tender*. Mr. *Collier* publish'd his short
'View when *France* declared for the
'*Chevalier*, upon the Death of *James*
'II, and his *Dissuasive*, upon the great
'Devastation which that Hurricane
'wrought, had amazed and astonished
'the Minds of Men, and made them
'obnoxious to Melancholy and despond-
'ing Thoughts. Mr. *Law* has taken
'the Opportunity to attack the Stage,
'upon the great Preparations which he
'heard were making abroad, and which
'the *Jacobites* flattered themselves were
'design'd in their Favour. As for
'Mr. *Bedford's Serious Remonstrance*,
'tho' I know nothing of the Time of
'publishing it, yet I dare to lay Odds
'it was either upon the Duke *D'Ar-*
'*mant's* being at *Somerset-House*, or
'upon the late Rebellion.

In the Year 1727, the Truce that had so long subsisted between *Pope* and *Dennis*, seemed to be broke by the former,

in

in publiſhing his and *Swift*'s Miſcellanies, where in a Piece called *The Art of Sinking in Poetry* our Author is treated in a very ſcurvy Manner, and compared to a *Porpoiſe*, which ſeldom appears in plain Light, but whenever it does, is only a ſhapeleſs ugly Monſter. In this Pamphlet indeed Mr. *Dennis*'s Name was not ſet at full length; but that Decency was not obſerved afterwards, when the ſame Author publiſh'd that terrible Poem, called the *Dunciad*. In this, the Poet, having made the Goddeſs of *Dulneſs* lead her Children, the Dunces, to *Fleet-ditch*, to dive and recreate themſelves, thus deſcribes our Critick.

In naked Majeſty great Dennis *ſtands,*
And, Milo like, ſurveys his Arms and Hands,
Then ſighing thus, "And am I now threeſcore?
"Ah! why, ye Gods! ſhould two and two make four?"
He ſaid, and climb'd a ſtranded Lighter's height,
Shot to the black Abyſs, and plung'd downright;

The

The Senior's Judgment all the Crowd [*admire,*
Who but to ſink the deeper, roſe the [*higher.*

The Provocation he received from theſe, and ſome other Lines, made him, to be revenged, fall into the heinous Offence of *Punning*. This Crime he had once in ſo great Abhorrence, that he ſaid, no Man would make a *Pun* that would not pick a Pocket; yet in a Letter of his in the *Daily Journal*, *June* 11, 1728, he has this extraordinary Link of *Puns*, upon *Pope*.

'Let us take the initial and finial 'Letters of his Name, *viz.* A. P—E. 'and they give you the Idea of an *Ape* '——*Pope* comes from the *Latin* Word '*Popa*, which ſignifies a little Wart; 'or from *Poppyſma*; becauſe he was con-'tinually *popping* out Squibs of Wit, or 'rather *Popyſmata*, or *Popiſms*.

But notwithſtanding all this fine Wit, it is ſaid, that this ſame *Pope*, got ſo much the better of him, that he never more eſſay'd to draw his Quill; but we rather take that to be owing to a handſome

ſome Sum of Money, that was ſent him from an unknown Hand, with which he was enable to ſupport himſelf, without the ungrateful Task of writing to pleaſe a Taſteleſs and degenerate Age, till within a few Months of his Death, when falling into great Infirmities both in his Perſon and Purſe, he met with an unexpected Relief from the Religious Society of Players in the *Hay-market*, who on the 18th of *December* laſt, acted the *Provoked Huſband*, or a *Journey to London*, for his Benefit, which put about a hundred Pounds in his Pocket. Some Gentlemen, who it ſeems writes Verſes in Imitation of *Milton*, we have not yet learnt his Name, was very generous in ſupporting his Intereſt in this Affair, and another Gentleman was as generous in writing a Copy of Verſes, in Mr. *Dennis*'s Name, to thank him, which he himſelf never ſaw; but hearing them mention'd, after they were printed, and getting a Friend to read them to him, he ſwore *by* G——, *they could be no one but that Fool* S——'s; this, we muſt needs ſay, was an ill Return for a Favour ſo well intended, and when the Verſes too were ſo pretty, that nothing could add to them, but the Au-

thor's own agreeable and emphatical Manner of repeating them. Thus did this poor Gentleman maintain his Humour to the laſt, for not above two Days after he paſt this peeviſh Judgment on the Verſes, ſigned J. D. he expired; which was on *Sunday* the 6th of *January*, 1733-4, in the 77th Year of his Age. We think we cannot adorn his Heart in a more fragrant Manner, than by hanging the following Elegy upon it; wire-drawn in leſs than a Fortnight's Time, from the Brain of the very Pink of Courteſy and Poeſy.

What now ſhall longer dim his deſtin'd
[Shine!

VERSES written on the Death of Mr. DENNIS.

ADIEU, unſocial Excellence! —*At laſt,*
Thy Foes are vanquiſh'd, and thy Fears are
[paſt!
Want, *the grim Recompence of Truth, like*
[Thine,
Shall, now, no longer dim *thy deſtin'd Shine:*
Th'impatient Envy, The Diſdainful Air,
The Front, malignant, and, The captious Stare!
The Furious Petulance, The jealous Start;
The Miſt *of Frailties, that obſcur'd thy Heart!*
Veil'd

Veil'd, in thy Grave, *ſhall, unremember'd, lie;—*
For, Theſe *were Parts, of* Dennis, *Born, to*
[*Die!*
But, there's a Nobler Seity, *behind;*
His Reaſon *dies not: and has* Friends, *to*
[find.
Tho', Here, *Revenge, and Pride, withheld*
[*his Praiſe,*
No Wrongs ſhall reach him, through his Future
[Days.
The Riſing Ages ſhall redeem his Name;
And Nations read *him, into Laſting Fame.*
In his Defects, *untaught, His labour'd Page*
Shall the ſlow Gratitude of Time, *engage.—*
Perhaps, ſome Story, of his pitied Woe,
Mix'd, in faint Shades, may, with his Mem'ry
[*go!*
To touch Futurity, with gen'rous Shame,
And Backward caſt an unavailing Blame
On Times, too Cold, to taſte His Strength *of*
[Art;
Yet, warm Contemners, of too weak *a* Heart!
Reſt, *in thy Duſt,— contented with thy Lot;*
Thy Good *remember'd, and thy* Bad *forgot!*
Tis more, than Cæſar, *and His* World, *cou'd*
[*give!* —
Spread, o'er His Virtues, *His* Few Errors
[*live!*
'Till Reas'ning Brutes, *whoſe Speck of Soul*
[wants Room,
To lodge, *the juſt* Conception *of His Doom,*
Dare, with lewd Licenſe, poize *His* queſtion'd
[*Fame;*
And Blot *the* Sacred Rev'rence *of his Name!*

F I N I S.